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July 12, 2002

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RECEIVED

JUL 1 2 2002

PROPERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION DIFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Eric Einhorn, Acting Chief
Telecommunications Access Policy Division
Wireline Competition Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re:

LETTER OF APPEAL

VIA: HAND DELIVERY AND FACSIMILE (202) 418-2825

Legal Reporting Name: Morris Communications, Inc.

Filer 499 ID: 812163

Dear Mr. Einhorn:

Morris Communications, Inc. ("Morris"), by its attorneys, and pursuant to the instructions contained in the letter attached as <u>Exhibit One</u>, hereby appeals the decision of the Universal Service Administrative Company ("USAC") dated May 15, 2002, which is attached as <u>Exhibit One</u>. In that decision, USAC notified Morris that it was unable to accept the revised FCC Form 499-A submitted by Morris on or about March 25, 2002, covering the time period January 1 – December 31, 1999, because the revision "was not filed within one year of the original submission." Morris respectfully submits that, for the reasons stated herein, the revised Form 499-A, a copy of which is attached as <u>Exhibit Two</u>, should be accepted by USAC and that USAC should promptly issue corrected invoices to reflect the proper universal service contribution amount owed by Morris.

I. Background

When Morris completed and filed its FCC Form 499 for the time period covering January 1 through December 31, 1999, it mistakenly reported its intrastate revenues as international revenues. Morris has no international revenues. This clerical error resulted in Morris being improperly billed over \$500,000 in universal service fees (based upon Morris's calculations, Morris should have been billed approximately \$55,000 to \$70,000).

Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) July 12, 2002 Page 2

The management of Morris contacted USAC by telephone several times after receiving the erroneous invoice to explain the problem and to request an amended invoice. The errors were never corrected, so Morris's Controller contacted USAC by telephone in April and July 2001 to again request amended invoices. Morris's Controller was told that the billing error would be corrected; however, Morris's invoices were never corrected, and its invoices still show an improper outstanding balance of over \$475,000.

In March 2002, Morris's Controller spoke with Lori Terraciano of USAC about the invoice problems, and Ms. Terraciano provided guidance concerning the correction of previous erroneous filings and the manner in which Form 499 filings should be made in the future. Pursuant to Ms. Terraciano's instructions, Morris re-filed its Form 499 covering January – December 1999, on March 25, 2002. That corrective filing was rejected in USAC's letter dated May 15, 2002, since it was not filed within one year of the original submission (See Exhibit One).

II. USAC Does Not Have Authority To Assess Universal Service Payments Based Upon Intrastate Revenues.

Morris submits that, because USAC's original calculation of more than \$500,000 in universal service fees owed by Morris was based upon Morris's intrastate revenue figures, it is a void assessment and cannot be sustained. As noted above – and as Morris has explained to USAC in several telephone discussions – Morris mistakenly reported its intrastate revenues as international revenues in its original Form 499 filing for 1999. Morris does not provide international services, and discovered its mistake in completing the Form 499 when it received its invoice from USAC assessing more than \$500,000 in universal service contribution fees.

Neither the FCC nor USAC has authority to assess universal service contributions based upon intrastate revenues. See Texas Office of Public Utility Counsel v. FCC, 183 F.3d 393, 448 (5th Cir. 1999), cert. denied, 530 U.S. 1210 (2000). See also In the Matter of Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Access Charge Reform, Sixteenth Order On Reconsideration in CC Docket No. 96-45, Eighth Report And Order in CC Docket 96-45, Sixth Report And Order in CC Docket 96-262, 15 FCC Rcd 1679, para. 15 (1999) (stating, "Specifically, in response to the court's determination that the Commission lacks jurisdiction to assess providers' intrastate revenues, we have eliminated intrastate revenues from the [universal service] contribution base."). See also Sections 54.706 and 54.709 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.706, 54.709.

Because Morris's original universal service assessment was based upon figures that included intrastate revenues, that assessment is void as a matter of law. Therefore, Morris respectfully requests that USAC recalculate the valid amount of universal service fees owed by Morris based upon the revised Form 499-A attached as <u>Exhibit Two</u> (which was filed with USAC on or about March 25, 2002).

III. Morris's Inclusion Of Intrastate Revenues On Its Form 499 Was The Result Of a Clerical Error.

When Morris completed and filed its original Form 499 filing for the time period covering January through December 1999, it mistakenly reported its intrastate revenue figures as international revenues. This mistake was purely a clerical error caused by confusion concerning the proper manner in which to complete the Form 499.

The FCC has on numerous occasions allowed applicants to amend applications that omitted information, or contained incorrect information due to clerical error, when the applicant made a substantial good faith effort to promptly correct the deficiency. See, e.g., Hispanic Information and Telecommunications Network, Inc., 60 RR 2d 828 (M. Med. Bur., 1986) (applicant was able to timely correct an error in an application by subsequently submitting a corrected document); William M. Ryan, 1 FCC Rcd. 1077 (Com Car. Bur., 1986) (a clerical error in a cellular application could be remedied by a post-lottery amendment); Butte Cellular Group, 60 FCC Rcd. 6745 (1991) (reinstatement of a cellular application containing missing documents due to clerical error was warranted).

Since receiving USAC's assessment based upon the original Form 499 filing, Morris has made many good-faith attempts to correct the problems with Morris's universal service invoices. The management of Morris and Morris's Controller have contacted USAC numerous times, attempting to resolve the problems with Morris's universal service invoices, and they were told in telephone discussions that the invoices would be corrected. It was not until March 2002 that Morris's Controller was advised by Ms. Terraciano of USAC that submission of a revised Form 499 for the January – December 1999 time period would be necessary to correct the invoices. Morris completed the revised Form 499 promptly after the discussion with Ms. Terraciano and submitted the revised Form 499 on March 25, 2002. Consistent with FCC precedents concerning obvious, clerical errors, Morris should be permitted to make appropriate corrections to its Form 499.1

IV. Conclusion

In light of the fact that USAC's original universal service contribution assessment upon Morris for the January – December 1999 time period included intrastate revenue figures, and Morris's good-faith attempts over the past two years to correct the problems with its universal service invoices, Morris requests that it be permitted to correct the

¹ Morris notes that, although USAC's letter of May 15, 2002, refers to a one-year deadline for making revisions to Form 499 filings, Morris cannot find any basis in the FCC's rules for imposing such a deadline, nor does USAC's letter cite any rule as the basis for the one-year deadline. Assuming (without conceding) that the one-year deadline is valid, it should not be enforced in this instance, or should be waived, because Morris's clerical error in completing the Form 499 led to a dramatic overassessment of amounts owed by Morris; therefore, there was clearly no intent on the part of Morris to report inaccurate revenues.

Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) July 12, 2002 Page 4

clerical error included on its original Form 499 filing for the January – December 1999 time period without further delay. In this regard, Morris requests that USAC process the Form 499 filing made by Morris on or about March 25, 2002, and issue corrected invoices to Morris reflecting the proper universal service contribution amounts owed.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Please contact the undersigned directly if you have any questions or if you require additional information.

Frederick M. Joyce

Sincerely,

Marianne Roach Case

MRC:mrc Enclosures

cc: Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), 2120 L Street, NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20037

H. A. Morris, III, President and CEO, Morris Communications, Inc.

W. Todd Hicks, Controller, Morris Communications, Inc.

WDC01/97747v1



Universal Service Administrative Company

May 15, 2002

Morris Communications, Inc. P.O. Box 16419
Greenville, SC 29606

Filer 499 ID: 812163

Attn: Todd Hicks

RE: Form 499-A Revision Rejection

The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) has completed a review of the Revised FCC Form 499-A that you submitted for the purpose of revising revenue reported by Morris Communications, Inc. for the period January 1 – December 31, 1999. Based on the information provided, we are unable to accept the revision because it was not filed within one year of the original submission.

USAC recognizes that you may disagree with our decision. If you wish to file an appeal, your appeal must be received no later than 60 days after the date of this letter.

In the event that you choose to appeal the decision, you should follow these guidelines:

- Write a "Letter of Appeal to USAC" explaining why you disagree with this Revised Form 499-A Rejection letter and identify the outcome that you request;
- Mail your letter to:

Letter of Appeal USAC 2120 L Street, NW, Suite 600 Washington, DC 20037

- Appeals submitted by fax, telephone call, and c-mail will not be processed.
- Provide necessary contact information. Please list the name, address, telephone
 number, fax number, and e-mail address (if available) of the person who can most
 readily discuss this appeal with USAC.
- Identify the "Legal Reporting Name" and "Filer 499 ID."
- Explain the appeal to the USAC. Please provide documentation to support your appeal.

 Attach a photocopy of this Revised Form 499-A Rejection decision that you are appealing.

USAC will review all "letters of appeal" and respond in writing within 90 days of receipt thereof.

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The response will indicate whether USAC:

- (1) agrees with your letter of appeal, and approves an outcome that is different from the Revised Form 499-A Rejection Letter; or
- (2) disagrees with your letter of appeal, and the reasons therefor.

If you disagree with the USAC response to your "letter of appeal," you may file an appeal with the FCC within 60 days of the date USAC issued its decision in response to your "Letter of Appeal." The FCC address where you may direct your appeal is:

Federal Communications Commission Office of the Secretary 445 12th Street, SW Room TW-A325 Washington, DC 20554

Please be sure to indicate the following information on all communications with the FCC; "Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21."

In the alternative, you may write and send an appeal letter directly to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and bypass USAC. Your letter of appeal to the FCC must explain why you disagree with the USAC decision. You are also encouraged to submit any documentation that supports your appeal. The FCC rules governing the appeals process (Part 54 of Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations 54.719 – 54.725) are available on the FCC web site (www.fcc.gov).

If you have questions or concerns regarding this letter, please contact Lisa Tubbs at (973) 884-8116 or Lori Terraciano at (973) 560-4426.

Sincerely,

USAC

2000	FCC Form 499A Telecommunications Reporting			-		Approval by OMB
*********		ctions before completing.	<<			3060-0865
		g = uus April 1.			u siring di di	
Block	Colvinios derrification interrogion:					
101	Filer 499 ID [If you don't know your number, contact the administrator a	nt (973)-560-4400.			•	
	If you are a new filer, leave blank and a Filer 499 ID will be assigned to	you.	812163			<u>-</u>
102	Legal name of reporting entity	Morris Communications, Ir	1 c.			
103	IRS employer identification number	57-0420663				
104	Name telecommunications service provider is doing business as		Morris Wireless			
105	Principel communications business. [Check the one that best describes	the reporting entity - see	directions. Check o	ne box only.)		
	CAP/CLEC Cellular/PCS/SMR (wireless t	elephony incl. by resale)		mcumbent LEC	. [interexchange Carrier (IXC)
	Local Reseller Operator Service Provider (C	SP)		Paging & Mess.	aging [Payphone Service Provider
	Pre-petd Card Private Service Provider			Satellite	·	
	Shared Tenant Service Provider	SMR (dispatch)		Toll Reseller		Wireless Data
	If Other Local, Other Mobile or Other Toll is chacked,	Other Local		Other Mobile		Other Toll
	describe cerrier type / services provided:					
108	Holding company D2F(All affiliated companies should show same name	here)				
107	FCC Registration Number (FRN) [not required for April 2000 filing]		0001-8848-57			
108	Management company [if carrier is managed by another entity]					
109	Complete mailing address of reporting entity corporate headquarters		Morris Commun PO Box 16419	ications, Inc.		
			Greenville, SC	29606		
110	Complete business address for customer inquiries and complaints					
	(if different from address entered on Line 109)					
111	Telephone number for customer inquiries and complaints		(800) -	864-8922		
112	All trade names that you use in providing telecommunications services.	This		*		
	should include all names by which you are identified on customer bills.		<u> </u>			
	a Morris Wireless		h			
	b Beap One		1			
	c Morris Communications, Inc.		 			
	<u>a</u>		<u>k</u>			
	6		<u>'</u>	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
	Use an additional sheet if neces	eanr Each reporting and	m /	amas used to sel-	c nethalise	
						
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FCC Form 499-A February 2000

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201	Filer 499 ID [from Line 101]	B12163
202	Legal name of reporting entity [from Line 102]	Morris Communications, Inc.
203	Person who completed this worksheet	Todd Hicks
204	Telephone number of this person	{ 864 } - 234-7309
205	Fax number of this person	(864) - 234-7514
208	E-mail of this person	thicks@mortiswireless.com
207	Corporate office, attn. name, and malling address to which future Telecommunications Reporting Worksheets should be sent	Morris Communications, Inc. Attn: Trace Morris PO Box 16419 Greenvilla, SC 29606
208	Billing address and billing contact person: [Pian administrators will send bills for contributions to this address. Please attach a written request for alternative billing arrangements.]	Monis Communications, Inc. Aftn: Todd Hicks PO Box 15419 Greenville, SC 29608
Block	B. Appliation Spiritual of Principals	All carriers must complete Lines 209 through 213
209	D.C. Agent for Service of Process per 47 U.S.C 413	Alston & Bird LLC Attn: Rick Joyce
	D.C. Agent for Service of Process per 47 U.S.C 413 Telephone number of D.C. agent	Alston & Bird LLC Attn: Rick Joyce (202) - 758-3300
210		
210 211	Telephone number of D.C. agent	(202) - 758-3300
210 211 212	Telephone number of D.C. agent Fex number of D.C. agent E-mall of D.C. agent Complete business address of D.C. agent for hand service of documents	(202) - 756-3300 (202) - 756-3333
210 211 212 213	Telephone number of D.C. agent Fex number of D.C. agent E-mall of D.C. agent Complete business address of D.C. agent for hand service of documents	(202) - 756-3300 (202) - 756-3333 rjoyce@alston.com Alston & Bird LLC Attn: Rick Joyce 601 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. North Bidg. 11th Floor
210 211 212 213	Telephone number of D.C. agent Fax number of D.C. agent E-mall of D.C. agent Complete business address of D.C. agent for hand service of documents	(202) - 756-3300 (202) - 756-3333 rjoyce@alston.com Alston & Bird LLC Attn: Rick Joyce 601 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. North Bidg. 11th Floor
210 211 212 213 214 214	Telephone number of D.C. agent Fax number of D.C. agent E-mail of D.C. agent Complete business address of D.C. agent for hand service of documents Alternate Agent for Service of Process (optional)	(202) - 756-3300 (202) - 756-3333 rjoyce@alston.com Alston & Bird LLC Attn: Rick Joyce 601 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. North Bidg. 11th Floor
210 211 212 213 214 215 216	Telephone number of D.C. agent Fax number of D.C. agent E-mall of D.C. agent Complete business address of D.C. agent for hand service of documents Alternate Agent for Service of Process (optional) Telephone number of alternate agent	(202) - 756-3300 (202) - 756-3333 rjoyce@alston.com Alston & Bird LLC Attn: Rick Joyce 601 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. North Bidg. 11th Floor
210 211 212 213 214 214 215 216 217	Telephone number of D.C. agent Fax number of D.C. agent E-mail of D.C. agent Complete business address of D.C. agent for hand service of documents Atternate Agent for Service of Process (optional) Telephone number of afternate agent Fax number of afternate agent	(202) - 756-3300 (202) - 756-3333 rjoyce@alston.com Alston & Bird LLC Attn: Rick Joyce 601 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. North Bidg. 11th Floor

FCC Form 489-A February 2000

2000 FCC Form 499A Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet Page 3							
Ekiack, S. Garrier's Coucies Revolue Uniformation							
301 Filer 499 ID [from Line 101]	812163						
302 Legal name of reporting entity [from Line 102]	Morris Communications, In	ıc.					
Report Billed Revenue for January 1 through December 31, 1999		If breakouts are not bool	Breakouts				
Do not report any negative numbers. Dollar amounts may be rounded to	Total Revenue	amounts, enter whole		1 A			
the nearest thousand dollars. However, report all amounts as whole dollars.		percentage estimates interstate internation	Interstate Revenue	ілternational Revenue			
See instructions regarding percent interstate & international.	(a)	(b) (c)	(d)	(e)			
Revenue from Service Provided for Resale by Other Contributers to							
Federal Universal Service Support Mechanisms							
Fixed local service							
303 Monthly service, local calling, connection charges, vertical features,	-						
and other local exchange service including subscriber line and PICC charges to IXCs							
a Provided as unbundled network elements		İ		1			
b Provided under other arrangements							
304 Per minute charges for originating or terminating calls							
Provided under state or federal access tariff	·	\					
b Provided as unbundled network elements or other contract arrangem	ent						
305 Local private fine & special access							
306 Payphone compensation from toll carriers							
307 Other local telecommunications service revenues							
308 Universal service support revenue received from Federal or State Source	S						
Mobile service (including wireless telephorny, peging & messeging, and other mobile services)							
309 Monthly, activation, and message charges except toll	459,130	12%	55,096	<u> </u>			
Toll service							
310 Operator and toll calls with alternative billing arrangements (credit							
card, collect, international call-back, etc.)	 	<u> </u>					
Ordinary Long Distance (MTS, customer toll free 800/888 service, associated monthly account maintenance, PICC		1 .					
pass-through, and switched services not reported above)							
312 Long distance private line services			 				
313 Satellite services	1						
314 All other long distance services							

PERSONS MAKING WILLFUL FALSE STATEMENTS IN THE WORKSHEET CAN BE PUNISHED BY FINE OR IMPRISONMENT UNDER TITLE 18 OF THE UNITED STATES CODE, 18 U.S.C. §1003

	FCC Form 499A Telecommunications Reporting V		MITY 6 2 And Andrews			Page 4	
	isi Buturanding ni Teresconing ni Enginia Revenue Intorpration						
401	Filer 499 ID (from Line 101)						
402	Legal name of reporting entity [from Line 102]						
January 1 through December 31, 1999 Do not report any negative numbers. Dollar amounts may be rounded to		Total		are not book	Breakouts		
the no	earest thousand dollars. However, report all amounts as whole dollars.	Revenue	amounts, enter whole percentage estimates		Interstate	International	
See n	nstructions regarding percent interstate & international.	110703120	interstate	Internationa	Kevenue	Hevenue	
	From All Other Sources (end-user telcom. & non-telcom.)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	
403	Surcharges or other amounts on bills identified as recovering State or Federal universal service contributions	115,438	12%		13,853		
	ucal service			100			
404	Monthly service, local calling, connection charges, vertical features, and other local exchange service charges except for federally tariffed subscriber line charges and PICC charges			:			
405	Tariffed subscriber line charges and PICC charges levied by a local exchange carrier on a no-PIC customer	·			·		
406	Local private line and special access service				·		
407	Payphone coin revenues						
408	Other local telecommunications service revenues						
Module	service fincluding wireless felephory, paging & messaging, and other mobile services)						
409	Monthly and activation charges	8,353,004	12%	***********	1,002,360		
410	Message charges including roaming but excluding toll charges						
Toll ser							
411	Pre-paid calling card (including card sales to customers and non-carrier distributors) reported at face value of cards					Control of the contro	
412	International calls that both originate and terminate in foreign points		0%	100%			
413	Operator and toll calls with alternative billing arrangements (credit card, collect, international call-back, etc.) other than revenue reported on Line 412						
414	Ordinary Long Distance (MTS, customer toll free 800/888 service, associated monthly account maintenance, PICC pass-through, and other switched services not reported above)		·				
415	Long distance private line services.						
416	Satellite services						
417	All other long distance services		-		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
418	Enhanced services, inside wiring maintenance, billing and	20 2 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10					
	collection, customer premises equipment, published directory, dark fiber, Internet and non-telecommunications service revenue	4,085,658					
419	Gross billed revenue from all sources [incl. reseller & non-telcom.] [Lines 303 through 314 plus Lines 403 through 418]	13,013,230			1,071,309		
420	Universal service contribution bases [Lines 403 through 411 & Lines 413 through 417] RSONS MAKING WILLFUL FALSE STATEMENTS IN THE WORKSHEET CAN BE PUN	8,468,442			1,016,213		

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501 F	er 499 !D from Line 101]					
502 L	egal name of reporting e	ntity (from Line 102) Mon	ris Communications, Inc.			
		P administration and must provide the percentage to certify that they are exempt from this requirement			Block 3	Block 4
T HITTY CO	Percentage of revenue	e reported in Block 3 and Block 4 billed in each reg note percentage. Enter 0 of no service was provide	ion of the country. Round		Carrier's Carrier (a)	End-User Telecom. (b)
503	Southeast: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louislana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee and U.S. Virgin Islands			100%	100%	
504	Western:	Wesfern: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nabraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming			%	%
505	West Coast:	California, Hawaii, Nevada, American Samoa, Guarn, Northern Mariana Islands, and Wake Island.			%	%
508	Mid-Atlantic: Delaware, District of Columbia, Manyland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia			%	%	
507	Mid-West: Illanols, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin			%	%	
508	Northeast: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont			%	%	
509	Southwest: Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahorna, & Texas			%	%	
510	Total	[Percentages must add to 0 or 100]			100%	100 %
511		rs that do not contribute to Universal Service supp a filer's TRS, NANPA and LNP contribution bases on revenues below.				
	·	•	٠,٠ -	(a)	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	b)
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FCC Form 499-A February 2000

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2000	FCC Form 499A Telecommunications Report	rting Worksheet		٠.		Page 6	
Bics t	BACCEPTE CATION TO SIGNATURE WAS IN THE THEF						
. 601	Filer 499 ID (from Line 101)	8	12163			,	
602	Legal name of reporting entity [from Line 102]	Morris Communicat	ions, Inc.		•		
	Section IV of the instructions provides information on which type. Any entity claiming to be exempt from one or more contribution of the Universal Service administrator will determine which entities in Block 4, even if you fail to so certify, below.] I certify that the reporting entity is exempt from contributing to: Universal Service TRS Ide explanation below:	equirements should so cert	ify below and attach a	n explanation.		L.NP Administration	
, 104							
604	I certify that the revenue data contained herein is privileged and would likely cause substantial harm to the competitive position of of the revenue information contained herein pursuant to Sections 54.711 and 64.604 of the Commission's Rules.	Tthe company. I request no		omation			X
	i certify that I am an officer of the above-named reporting entity, knowledge, information and belief, all statements of fact contains statement of the affairs of the above-named company for the pre-	ed in this Worksheel are tru					
605	Signature			Man			-
606	Printed name of officer	H. A. Morris III		, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , 			
607	Position with reporting entity	President/CEO		,			
608	Date	3/22/02				,	
609	This filing is:	Original filing	<u> </u>	X Revised filing		.*	

Do not mail checks with this form. Send this form to: Form 498 c/o NECA, 80 South Jefferson Road, Whilippany New Jersey, 07981
For additional information regarding this worksheet contact: Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet Information: (973) 550-4400 or via e-mail: Form459@neca.org

PERSONS MAKING WILLFUL FALSE STATEMENTS IN THE WORKSHEET CAN BE PUNISHED BY FINE OR IMPRISONMENT UNDER TITLE 18 OF THE UNITED STATES CODE, 18 U.S.C. §1081

FCC FORTH 499-A
Pabruary 2000